

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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***For Immediate Release***

**FEBRUARY 11, 2005**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on February 10, 2005, **LAURA LEE MARRS**, age 27, formerly of West Frankfort, Illinois, pleaded guilty to a one-count Indictment in Federal Court in Benton, Illinois.

The Indictment charged that from on or about January 1, 2002, to February 4, 2003, in Williamson County, within the Southern District of Illinois, MARRS, being an officer, director, agent, or employee of the Southern Illinois University Credit Union, an institution the deposits of which were on those dates insured by the National Credit Union Administration, did with intent to injure or defraud the Southern Illinois University Credit Union, embezzle the sum of approximately \$106,000 of the monies and funds belonging to or entrusted to the custody or care of the Southern Illinois University Credit Union, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 657.

The facts established that MARRS, who was the branch manager of the Southern Illinois University Credit Union branch office in Marion, Illinois, embezzled \$106,000 from the Southern Illinois University Credit Union to use for her own personal benefit. The embezzlement was discovered on February 5, 2003, when Southern Illinois University Credit Union staff conducted a surprise cash audit of their Marion, Illinois branch.

A sentencing hearing for MARRS has been set for May 13, 2005, at the United States Courthouse in Benton, Illinois. MARRS faces a penalty of up to 30 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$1,000,000, and a term of supervised release of up to 5 years.

The investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney George Norwood.